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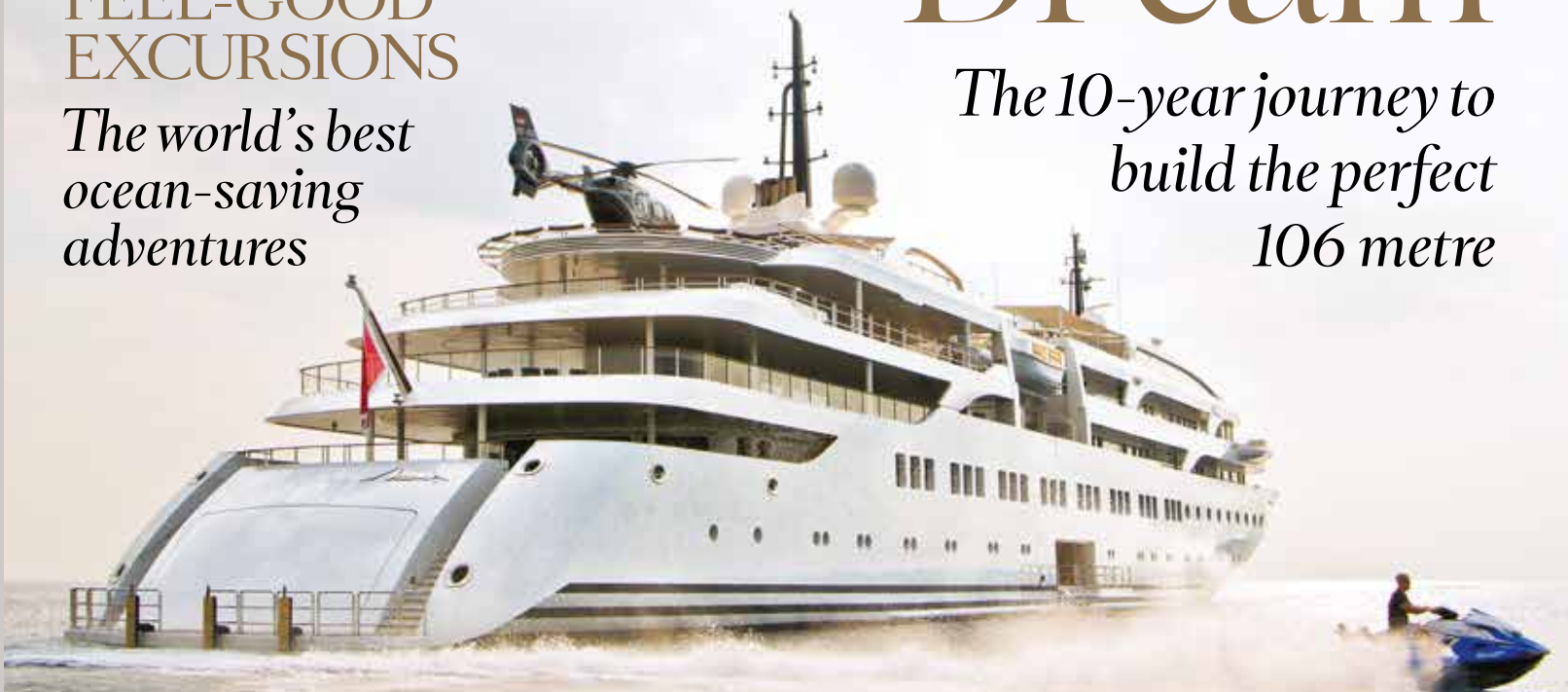
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*Oceanco's 90-metre DAR has fixed a perennial problem:  
how to enhance the views from inside while keeping the outside  
from looking in. Cécile Gauert learns how*

# A TOUCH OF GLASS

Photography - George Ajoury



Top: the "sea entrance" lobby provides comfortable seating for guests waiting to board DAR's tenders. Above: a corner of the main deck saloon is dedicated to a games area. The artwork is by a Japanese artist working in Murano, Italy. Opposite page: original drawings from interior designer Valentina Zannier



group of journalists lingers over a sculptural bar, while a yard employee leads another wide-eyed writer past delicate leaf shapes traced in the floor of the light-filled spa, towards butterflies so vividly painted on the bathroom wall that they seem ready to fly away when the door opens. We're exploring the treasure trove of details on the Oceanco DAR, showcased at the Monaco Yacht Show, and it is bewitching us. But there is one feature that stops everyone dead: the panorama of Monaco unfurling behind a glass wall.

The view dominates the upper saloon: tenders shuttling in and out of the port, white yachts in the packed marina, apartment blocks on the hillside and the blue sky above it all. Walking to the edge of the space and leaning against full-height glass produces the sensation of being suspended in mid-air. There is no distortion: it's like we're looking through sunglasses that enhance colours and reduce glare. To the outside world, however, the glass might as well be a magical cloak shrouding all that is within. Even with lights on, it is impossible to make out what is behind the glass from the outside.

"You can see Monaco, but Monaco can't see you," says Luiz de Basto, DAR's designer. "The concept of the design is a completely connected interior and exterior."

That immersive effect, that moment of surprise as the outside world pours in, the absence of boundaries between inside and out: de Basto had imagined it all eight years earlier while seated in his Miami office overlooking Biscayne Bay.

His quest at the time was to design an 85-metre yacht that concealed its volume and decks within a shapely glass envelope that would give its owners what he says they value above all else: privacy.

"Glass was the main inspiration as a way to improve contact with nature," he says. As he developed the idea further, he thought about one particular sea animal that eventually lent its name to the project. The shark.

"The association with the hammerhead shark jumped at me when I searched for a way to create wing stations. I've always been very interested in nature and the animal world, probably because of my childhood in Angola and early contact with the big outdoors," he says.

Just as the hammerhead's wide-set eyes give it exceptional vision, the shapely wing stations could enhance the captain's ability to see down the long hull sides. He took his idea further. "If you look closely you see that the mast is like a dorsal fin. Everything sort of flowed from there," he says. "In three or four pages, the yacht was born, almost like you see it here."

Of course, it's one thing to imagine and draw a concept; it's quite another to bring to fruition a technically complex design such as this.

The next step de Basto took was to show his idea to Dutch superyacht builder Oceanco. "I thought they would be the right match for this particular project, sportier and more unconventional than most and with lots of glass," he says.

They had a meeting at the Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show a few weeks later. "We liked the overall design and the technical challenges associated with the project and started working on a design package together," says Oceanco. The yacht grew a few metres to an even 90, but the integrity of the design remained. "We went to great lengths to keep the overall look, but also the details of his design. We remained faithful to the concept, which is strong and well thought out."





Valentina Zannier of Italian studio Nuvolari Lenard, went to work on fine tuning features to more precisely fit the owners' requirements and ideas. All these needed to be incorporated within the design envelope that they really enjoyed, particularly, according to Oceanco, "the total black surface, the 'hammerhead' and the shark fin".

Realising this smooth "total black" glass effect, so essential to the original design, was one of the greatest technical challenges. "The thickness of the glass varies with the location, but the heaviest is 30 millimetres and consists of three layers. In the superstructure above the main deck there are 186 windows. Of these windows, 112 are bent in one direction and 28 are double curved," says Oceanco.

To create the look de Basto had designed, "the glass had to be in one flush surface from the main deck to the sundeck. To achieve this, a lot of special solutions had to be found, which included measuring the superstructure in 3D multiple times at different stages of the build," says Martin de Jager, engineering project manager for Oceanco. "From this, a three-dimensional model was then developed that was used not only for the shape of every individual window but also for the thickness of the filler where painted surfaces adjoin the glass. Another challenge was where to route pipes and HVAC [heating, ventilation and air conditioning] ducts. With the large glass surfaces there was little room to place piping and ducting [near] the outside of the superstructure. Usually the underside of side decks can be used for ventilation grills. In the case of DAR [which has no walkarounds for the sake of privacy] this was not possible."

Where did all the pipes and ducts go? "We've put them everywhere. If you open up the ceiling, it is completely full," de Jager says. In spite of this, the ceiling height is never lower than 2.25 metres and reaches up to

One of the most complex aspects of the yacht was its most obvious feature - the seamless black glass that encloses the superstructure. "DAR has about 390 square metres of glass in the superstructure alone, not counting doors and hull windows. The glass panels are 1.8 metres by three metres each, glued to the aluminium superstructure with no mechanical fasteners," says de Basto. Adding all of its windows and doors, the yacht carries about 22 tonnes of exterior glass, made by German glass maker TILSE, which developed a special sealant and glue that had to be approved by Lloyd's. "Elaborate calculations were made to assess the interaction between glue, superstructure and glass, and to see the relative movement in a seaway to make sure the glue would be able to cope," says Oceanco.

From a purely engineering point of view, this required a massive

**IT'S ONE THING TO DRAW A CONCEPT; IT'S QUITE ANOTHER TO BRING TO FRUITION A TECHNICALLY COMPLEX DESIGN SUCH AS THIS**

amount of work, which continued as construction began - once the concept had attracted the eye of a buyer.

The owners of the yacht that would eventually become DAR entrusted captain Klaudio Marcelic to make some inquiries on their behalf. The commercial team at Oceanco showed him the project they had been developing. Marcelic says he was attracted by the boat's "clean and distinctive lines", and in January 2014 he contacted Oceanco CEO Marcel Onkenhout. "Project Shark was outlined as we see it today from January to May and then presented to the client. The letter of intent was signed one month later," Marcelic says.

A larger team, which now included the owner's project manager and interior designer



2.4 metres in some areas.

Changes made to the original layout included the addition of a helideck and the relocation of the pool from one deck to another, a 1.6-metre-deep oval basin with a waterfall that retains its trajectory even as the yacht moves, a detail de Basto insisted upon. He designed all exterior decks, including folding carbon masts for umbrellas that complement the contours of the yacht when they are stored, and a huge sofa that seems to hover above the deck as it spins on a small axis to the sitter's desired position. The owner's deck includes a completely private spa pool flanked by windows that reveal the world to the owners, but not the owners to the world.

Although two designers handled the treatment of the exterior and interior decks, the overall feeling



Above: recreation areas occupy the aft portions of each deck, from the lower deck up through the main, upper and owner's decks. Opposite page, top: befitting an interior inspired by nature, a bas-relief of fish by DKT Artworks decorates the main stairwell



#### OUTSIDE EDGE

“*DAR*’s exterior aft decks exemplify a relaxed and sophisticated yachting lifestyle,” says designer Luiz de Basto, who decided to locate the guest spaces aft. *DAR* has three distinct exterior decks and each one is a spectacular feature in itself. The primary outside social space is on the upper deck, which is divided into two areas: the al fresco dining area and the pool area. The former is finished in pale-toned, easy-to-care-for Lapitec tile flooring, perfect for casual entertaining. The dining table, which seats 12 comfortably, has an unusual design feature. Its centre, made of glass and lit with LEDs, can be lowered with a remote control to create space for decorations or for ice to keep champagne, caviar or oysters chilled. In the other portion of the deck, the lap pool is raised above the deck to keep young children from falling in and provides comfortable seating for adults watching over them. A stabilised waterfall splashes into the pool from the deck above, creating a lovely ambience but also acting as a privacy curtain, shielding the pool from the dining area. The bulwarks, built in continuous glass, act as wind breakers while allowing for beautiful views. The umbrellas to port and starboard are designed to fit the deck perfectly. They don’t need to be dismantled and stowed – they pivot and lower to fit alongside the bulwarks until they’re needed again.

### A STABILISED WATERFALL SPLASHES INTO THE POOL FROM THE DECK ABOVE, ACTING AS A PRIVACY CURTAIN



PHOTOGRAPHY: GEORGE AJOURY; FRANCISCO MARTINEZ

Top: the owner’s deck includes a private outdoor haven. Above and opposite page: the upper deck pool, which is fitted with a swimming jet, is raised to make it safer for small children. The deck is enclosed by glass bulwarks, a safety feature as well as an aesthetic choice, providing an uninterrupted view to the horizon



remains surprisingly cohesive and relaxing throughout. The theme of nature, represented by the shark, continues inside.

“The client brief was to have a comfortable, light and very bright interior, with no dark timbers and inspired by nature,” Zannier says.

Motifs of fish, leaves, olive trees, blossoms and waves are cleverly integrated in a wide variety of materials, from paint to plaster, carved leather, engraved glass and embroideries. Linen is used in an unusual way, substituted for joinery on doors and drawers. Wood is used sparingly and when it is, it is mainly light-hued timber with an unusual finish, sycamore dyed grey, maple veneer steamed and bent into curves to form a floor detail, a little dark veneer used to contrast with limed ash.

Zannier says she is particularly fond of the staircase that wraps around the lift, which is finished in antiqued bronze – buttons and control panel included – and features a decorative glass panel as flooring. Along the wall a school of fish in Venetian plaster winds its way up the stairs, one of several pieces made by DKT Artworks. Tiny details are everywhere, including drops of resin mimicking water droplets on a window sill.

It all looks so effortlessly elegant. However, “with 120 different fabrics, 24 saddle leathers and a variety of artistic finishes and glass the interior was

very complex to execute,” says Oceanco. The task of outfitting this intricate interior went to List and Sinnex.

On the technical side, the yacht is just as impressive, fitted with a full Dynamic Positioning system and a classed integrated bridge. Its enormous garage accommodates a pair of 10.5-metre custom tenders, one open and the other a limo, built by Hodgdon Yachts in Maine.

The long foredeck conceals crew tenders and a telescopic mast, and is large enough for a helicopter to land and take off. The owners did not want teak, and de Basto opted for a grey paint that is cohesive with the overall colour scheme and does not create glare. The yacht also carries a built-in slide that deploys for a vertiginous drop from on high.

This enormous project now complete, de Basto delights in sharing the details. “I am glad to see it built and so close to the original sketches. That is amazing because of the many pressures any design of this size is subjected to from all sides during the construction process. Those pressures can derail an innovative, non-conventional design very quickly,” he says. When he walked on to the yacht for the first time, de Basto says it was like he was entering his sketch. It’s a grand design that has become an even grander reality. ■

## D A R

## O C E A N C O

**LOA** 90m  
**Beam** 14.2m  
**Draught** 4m  
**Gross tonnage** 2,926GT  
**Engines**  
 2 x 4,828hp  
 MTU 20V 4000 M73L

**Max speed**  
 20 knots  
**Tenders**  
 1 x 10.5m Hodgdon limo tender; 1 x 10.5m Hodgdon sport tender

**Owners/guests** 14  
**Crew** 31  
**Classification**  
 Lloyd’s Register, \*100A1 SSC Yacht Mono G6 \*LMC UMS SCM ECO-IHM IBS

**Construction** Steel hull; aluminium superstructure  
**Naval architecture**  
 Oceanco, Azure Yacht Design & Naval Architecture

**Exterior styling**  
 De Basto Designs  
**Interior design**  
 Nuvolari Lenard/Valentina Zannier

**Builder/year**  
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